

June 13, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lorne Malkiewich, Director  
Legislative Counsel Bureau

FROM: John P. Comeaux

SUBJECT: COMPARISONS OF NEW POSITIONS

I've reviewed Steve Abba's memorandum of June 5, 2003, titled Comparisons of New Positions, and the related attachments. Since this document has been misinterpreted by certain legislators, I want to provide a few observations about the presentation of the information in the attachments that, I believe, led to the misinterpretations.

The Attachment A presents the total number of State positions approved by the legislature for the 2001-03 biennium and the 2003-05 biennium. Unfortunately, it also included a column purporting to present new positions approved for each year of the biennium (862.64 for fiscal 2004, and 916.46 for fiscal 2005). A legislator was quoted as stating that the legislature had approved over 1,700 new positions for the biennium. Obviously, that is absolutely wrong. To begin with, the 916.46 "new" positions for fiscal 2005 is a cumulative number and includes the 862.64 for 2004. Secondly, the 916.46 "new" positions must be reduced by the existing positions that the legislature eliminated.

The bottom line is this: the total positions approved by the 2001 legislature for the 2002-03 fiscal year were 16,098.79; the total approved by the 2003 legislature for the 2004-05 fiscal year is 16,665.52. That is a net increase of 567.13 positions, or a 3.5% increase. We estimate overall that there is actually a slight decrease in the number of positions funded by the general fund. That means that the net additional positions are funded by federal grants, State highway funds or other dedicated funds.

Although the individual bits of information included in the attachments are arguably correct, the manner of presentation makes it difficult for the uninformed to understand.

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I hope you'll accept my comments as constructive and that, in the future, a simpler, easier to understand presentation format can be developed.

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John P. Comeaux  
Director

JPC:db

C:     Members of the Nevada Legislature